



Speech by

# Hon. Robert Swarten

**MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON**

Hansard Tuesday, 16 June 2009

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## MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

### Connell, Mr C; Social Housing

**Hon. RE SCHWARTEN** (Rockhampton—ALP) (Minister for Public Works and Information and Communication Technology) (9.52 am): At the outset, let me pass on my condolences to the family of Cyril Connell, one of Rockhampton's proudest sons and a very good friend of my father and myself.

I am pleased to inform the House of significant progress in delivering Queensland's social housing initiative under the Australian government's \$42 billion Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan. The Department of Public Works is working with private builders and developers to deliver approximately 4,000 new social housing dwellings for the Department of Communities. Developers large and small, building contractors and trade contractors such as electricians, plumbers and carpenters all stand to benefit. This program means jobs, jobs, jobs in virtually all parts of the state. Proposals for over 1,600 dwellings have already been approved by the Australian government, with development teams now working to complete construction of 500 dwellings by 30 June 2010 as part of the \$138 million stage 1 rollout.

I am pleased to advise that by early July over 90 dwellings will be under construction, with this number to increase to approximately 200 by the end of July. Along with all of this new construction, the Department of Public Works is also managing over \$40 million worth of additional repairs and maintenance to existing social housing under the nation building plan. Contrast that with the Tories when they were in government federally. So far, more than 11,000 maintenance and upgrade work orders are in progress, with an additional 7,000 completed. The \$40 million allocated to Queensland by the Australian government for 2008-09 has either been spent or has been committed.

In addition, the Department of Public Works is working closely with the department of education delivering the Building the Education Revolution program by leading the development of the overall procurement framework and models of delivery. While Nation Building work is being progressed, my department is also continuing to deliver the government's commitment to the supply of 673 units of housing funded by the Queensland government costing \$124 million in social housing projects in 2008-09 and beyond, and I see a smile on the Minister for Community Services' face with the impending budget today.

In May eight new dwellings commenced construction to the value of \$1.7 million and over \$14 million for social housing projects were approved to commence in the coming month. Not only is this work creating jobs in these building companies; it is also creating jobs in the supply chain. The Department of Public Works is continuing its history of delivering quality social housing projects on time and on budget and is well down the path of delivering over \$1.2 billion worth of housing for people in need in Queensland.